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SKILLS I

Skill Descriptions

Skills are presented in alphabetical order, in the following format. Entries that do not apply to a particular skill are omitted in that skill’s description.

Skill Description Format

Skill Name (Key Ability) Trained Only; Armor Penalty

The skill name line and the line beneath it include the following information:

**Key Ability:** The abbreviation for the ability whose modifier applies to the skill check. Exceptions: Speak Language and Read/Write Language have “None” given as their key ability because the use of these skills never requires a check.

**Trained Only:** If “Trained Only” appears on the line beneath the skill name, a character must have at least 1 rank in the skill to use it. If “Trained Only” is omitted, the skill can be used untrained. If any particular notes apply to trained or untrained use, they are covered in the Special section (see below).

**Armor Penalty:** If “Armor Penalty” appears on the line beneath the skill name, apply the armor penalty for the armor the character is wearing to checks involving this skill.

**Check:** What a character can do with a successful skill check, and the check’s DC.

**Try Again?:** Any conditions that apply to repeated attempts to use the skill for a particular purpose. If this entry is omitted, the skill check can be tried again without any inherent penalty other than taking additional time.

**Special:** Any particular notes that apply, such as whether a character can take 10 or take 20 when using the skill.

**Untrained:** Any details about using a skill untrained. If this entry doesn’t appear, it means the skill works the same even when used untrained, or that an untrained character can’t make checks with this skill (true for skills that are designated “Trained Only”).

**Time:** How much time it takes to make a check with this skill.

Computer Use (Int)

**Check:** Most normal computer operations don’t require a Computer Use check (though a character might have to make a Research check; see the Research skill description). However, searching an unfamiliar network for a particular file, writing computer programs, altering existing programs to perform differently (better or worse), and breaking through computer security are all relatively difficult and require skill checks.

**Find File:** This skill can be used for finding files or data on an unfamiliar system. The DC for the check and the time required are determined by the size of the site on which the character is searching.

Finding public information on the Internet does not fall under this category; usually, such a task requires a Research check. This application of the Computer Use skill only pertains to finding files on private systems with which the character is not familiar.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Size of Site | DC | Time |
| Personal computer | 10 | 1 round |
| Small office network | 15 | 2 rounds |
| Large office network | 20 | 1 minute |
| Massive corporate network | 25 | 10 minutes |

**Defeat Computer Security:** This application of Computer Use can’t be used untrained. The DC is determined by the quality of the security program installed to defend the system. If the check is failed by 5 or more, the security system immediately alerts its administrator that there has been an unauthorized entry. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify the character or cut off the character’s access to the system.

Sometimes, when accessing a difficult site, the character has to defeat security at more than one stage of the operation. If the character beats the DC by 10 or more when attempting to defeat computer security, the character automatically succeeds at all subsequent security checks at that site until the end of the character’s session (see Computer Hacking below).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Level of Security | DC |
| Minimum | 20 |
| Average | 25 |
| Exceptional | 35 |
| Maximum | 40 |

### Computer Hacking

Breaking into a secure computer or network is often called hacking.

When a character hacks, he or she attempts to invade a site. A site is a virtual location containing files, data, or applications. A site can be as small as a single computer, or as large as a corporate network connecting computers and data archives all over the world—the important thing is that access to the site connects the user to everything within it. Some sites can be accessed via the Internet; others are not connected to any outside network and can only be tapped into by a user who physically accesses a computer connected to the site.

Every site is overseen by a system administrator—the person in charge of the site, and who maintains its security. Often, the system administrator is the only person with access to all of a site’s functions and data. A site can have more than one system administrator; large sites have a system administrator on duty at all times. A character is the system administrator of his or her personal computer.

When a character hacks into a site, the visit is called a session. Once a character stops accessing the site, the session is over. The character can go back to the site in the future; when he or she does, it’s a new session.

Several steps are required to hack into a site:

**Covering Tracks:** This step is optional. By making a Computer Use check (DC 20), a character can alter his or her identifying information. This imposes a –5 penalty on any attempt made to identify the character if his or her activity is detected.

**Access the Site:** There are two ways to do this: physically or over the Internet.

**Physical Access:** A character gains physical access to the computer, or a computer connected to the site. If the site being hacked is not connected to the Internet, this is probably the only way a character can access it. A variety of skill checks may be required, depending on the method used to gain access.

**Internet Access:** Reaching a site over the net requires two Computer Use checks. The first check (DC 10) is needed to find the site on the net. The second is a check to defeat computer security (see the Computer Use skill description). Once a character has succeeded in both checks, the character has accessed the site.

**Locate What You’re Looking For:** To find the data (or application, or remote device) the character wants, make a Computer Use check. See Find File under the skill description.

**Defeat File Security:** Many networks have additional file security. If that’s the case, the character needs to make another check to defeat computer security.

**Do Your Stuff:** Finally, the character can actually do what he or she came to do. If the character just wants to look at records, no additional check is needed. (A character can also download data, although that often takes several rounds—or even several minutes, for especially large amounts of information—to complete.) Altering or deleting records sometimes requires yet another check to defeat computer security. Other operations can be carried out according to the Computer Use skill description.

**Defend Security:** If the character is the system administrator for a site (which may be as simple as being the owner of a laptop), he or she can defend the site against intruders. If the site alerts the character to an intruder, the character can attempt to cut off the intruder’s access (end the intruder’s session), or even to identify the intruder.

To cut off access, make an opposed Computer Use check against the intruder. If the character succeeds, the intruder’s session is ended. The intruder might be able to defeat the character’s security and access his or her site again, but the intruder will have to start the hacking process all over. Attempting to cut off access takes a full round.

One surefire way to prevent further access is to simply shut the site down. With a single computer, that’s often no big deal—but on a large site with many computers (or computers controlling functions that can’t be interrupted), it may be time-consuming or even impossible.

To identify the intruder, make an opposed Computer Use check against the intruder. If the character succeeds, the character learns the site from which the intruder is operating (if it’s a single computer, the character learns the name of the computer’s owner). Identifying the intruder requires 1 minute and is a separate check from cutting off access. This check can only be made if the intruder is accessing the character’s site for the entire length of the check—if the intruder’s session ends before the character finishes the check, the character automatically fails.

**Degrade Programming:** A character can destroy or alter applications on a computer to make use of that computer harder or impossible. The DC for the attempt depends on what the character tries to do. Crashing a computer simply shuts it down. Its user can restart it without making a skill check (however, restarting takes 1 minute). Destroying programming makes the computer unusable until the programming is repaired. Damaging programming imposes a –4 penalty on all Computer Use checks made with the computer (sometimes this is preferable to destroying the programming, since the user might not know that anything is wrong, and won’t simply decide to use a different computer).

A character can degrade the programming of multiple computers at a single site; doing so adds +2 to the DC for each additional computer.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Scope of Alteration | DC | Time |
| Crash computer | 10 | 1 minute |
| Destroy programming | 15 | 10 minutes |
| Damage programming | 20 | 10 minutes |

Fixing the degraded programming requires 1 hour and a Computer Use check against a DC equal to the DC for degrading it + 5.

**Write Program:** A character can create a program to help with a specific task. Doing so grants the character a +2 circumstance bonus to the task.

A specific task, in this case, is one type of operation with one target.

The DC to write a program is 20; the time required is 1 hour.

**Operate Remote Device:** Many devices are computer-operated via remote links. If the character has access to the computer that controls such systems, the character can either shut them off or change their operating parameters. The DC depends on the nature of the operation. If the character fails the check by 5 or more, the system immediately alerts its administrator that there has been an unauthorized use of the equipment. An alerted administrator may attempt to identify the character or cut off his or her access to the system.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Operation | DC | Time |
| Shut down passive remote (including cameras and door locks) | 20 | 1 round per remote |
| Shut down active remote (including motion detectors and alarms) | 25 | 1 round per remote |
| Reset parameters | 30 | 1 minute per remote |
| Change passcodes | 25 | 1 minute |
| Hide evidence of alteration | +10 | 1 minute |
| Minimum security | –5 | — |
| Exceptional security | +10 | — |
| Maximum security | +15 | — |

**Special:** A character can take 10 when using the Computer Use skill. A character can take 20 in some cases, but not in those that involve a penalty for failure. (A character cannot take 20 to defeat computer security or defend security.)

A character with the Gearhead feat gets a +2 bonus on all Computer Use checks.

**Time:** Computer Use requires at least a full-round action. The GM may determine that some tasks require several rounds, a few minutes, or longer, as described above.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Craft (Int)

This skill encompasses several categories, each of them treated as a separate skill: Craft (chemical), Craft (electronic), Craft (mechanical), Craft (pharmaceutical), Craft (structural), Craft (visual arts), and Craft (writing).

Craft skills are specifically focused on creating objects. To use a Craft skill effectively, a character must have a kit or some other set of basic tools. The purchase DC of this equipment varies according to the particular Craft skill.

To use Craft, first decide what the character is trying to make and consult the category descriptions below. Make a Wealth check against the given purchase DC for the object to see if the character succeeds in acquiring the raw materials. If the character succeeds at that check, make the Craft check against the given DC for the object in question. If the character fails the check, he or she does not make the object, and the raw materials are wasted (unless otherwise noted).

Generally, a character can take 10 when using a Craft skill to construct an object, but can’t take 20 (since doing so represents multiple attempts, and the character uses up the raw materials after the first attempt). The exception is Craft (writing); a character can take 20 because the character does not use up any raw materials (and thus no Wealth check is required to use the skill).

Craft (chemical) (Int) Trained Only

This skill allows a character to mix chemicals to create acids, bases, explosives, and poisonous substances.

**Acids and Bases:** Acids are corrosives substances. Bases neutralize acids but do not deal damage. A base of a certain type counteracts an acid of the same type or a less potent type.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Craft DCs | |  |
| Type of Acid | Purchase DC | Acid | Base | Time |
| Mild (1d6/1d10) **1** | 8 | 15 | 10 | 1 min. |
| Potent (2d6/2d10) | 12 | 20 | 15 | 30 min. |
| Concentrated (3d6/3d10) | 16 | 30 | 20 | 1 hr. |
| 1 The dice rolls in parentheses are typical contact damage/immersion damage caused per round of immersion. | | | | |

**Explosives:** Building an explosive from scratch is dangerous. If the Craft (chemical) check fails, the raw materials are wasted. If the check fails by 5 or more, the explosive compound detonates as it is being made, dealing half of its intended damage to the builder and anyone else in the burst radius.

If the check succeeds, the final product is a solid material, about the size of a brick. An explosive compound does not include a fuse or detonator. Connecting a fuse or detonator requires a Demolitions check.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Scratch-Built Explosive** | Purchase DC | **Craft DC** | **Reflex DC (save for half damage)** | **Time** |
| Improvised (1d6/5 feet) 1 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 1 round |
| Simple (2d6/5 feet) | 12 | 15 | 12 | 10 min. |
| Moderate (4d6/10 feet) | 16 | 20 | 12 | 1 hr. |
| Complex (6d6/15 feet) | 20 | 25 | 15 | 3 hr. |
| Powerful (8d6/20 feet) | 25 | 30 | 15 | 12 hr. |
| Devastating (10d6/25 feet) | 30 | 35 | 18 | 24 hr. |
| 1 The figures in parentheses are typical damage/burst radius for each type of explosive. | | | | |

Scratch built explosives deal concussion damage.

**Poisonous Substances**: Solid poisons are usually ingested. Liquid poisons are most effective when injected directly into the bloodstream. Gaseous poisons must be inhaled to be effective. The table below summarizes the characteristics of various poisons.

**Save DC:** The Difficulty Class of the Fortitude save to negate the effects of the poison.

**Initial Damage:** The damage a character takes immediately upon failing his or her Fortitude save.

**Secondary Damage:** The damage a character takes after 1 minute of exposure to the poison if the character fails a second saving throw. Ability score damage is temporary, unless marked with an asterisk, in which case the damage is permanent ability drain. Unconsciousness lasts for 1d3 hours, and paralysis lasts 2d6 minutes.

**Purchase DC:** The DC for the Wealth check necessary to obtain the raw materials to craft the poison, or to purchase one bottle of solid or liquid poison or one high-pressure cylinder of gaseous poison. A bottle holds four doses, while a cylinder holds enough gas to fill a 10-foot-radius area.

**Restriction:** The restriction rating for the poison, if any, and the appropriate black market purchase DC modifier. Remember to apply this modifier to the purchase DC when making a Wealth check to acquire the poison on the black market.

**Craft DC:** The DC of the Craft check to create a quantity of the poison.

**Time:** The amount of time required for the Craft check.

If the Craft check succeeds, the final product is a synthesized solid or liquid poison stored in a bottle (containing 4 doses) or a gas stored in a pressurized cylinder. When released, the gas is sufficient to fill a 10-foot-radius area and takes 1 round to fill the area.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table: Poisons | | | | | | | | |
| Poison | **Type** | **Save DC** | **Initial Damage** | **Secondary Damage** | **Purchase DC** | **Restriction** | **Craft DC** | **Time** |
| Arsenic | Ingested | 15 | 1d4 Str | 2d4 Con | 9 | Res (+2) | 24 | 4 hr. |
| Atropine | Injury | 13 | 1d6 Dex | 1d6 Str | 3 | Res (+2) | 14 | 1 hr. |
| Belladonna (plant) | Injury | 18 | 1d6 Str | 2d6 Str | 14 | Lic (+1) | n/a | n/a |
| Blue vitriol | Injury | 12 | 1d2 Con | 1d2 Con | 3 | Res (+2) | 9 | 1 hr. |
| Blue-ringed octopus venom | Injury | 15 | 1d4 Con | 1d4 Con | 14 | Lic (+1) | n/a | n/a |
| Chloral hydrate | Ingested | 18 | 1d6 Dex | Unconsciousness 1d3 hours | 12 | Res (+2) | 28 | 8 hr. |
| Chloroform**1** | Inhaled | 17 | Unconsciousness 1d3 hours | — | 9 | Res (+2) | 24 | 4 hr. |
| Curare (plant) | Injury | 18 | 2d4 Dex | 2d4 Wis | 15 | Res (+2) | n/a | n/a |
| Cyanide | Injury | 16 | 1d6 Con | 2d6 Con | 15 | Mil (+3) | 31 | 15 hr. |
| Cyanogen | Inhaled | 19 | 1d4 Dex | 2d4 Con | 12 | Mil (+3) | 28 | 8 hr. |
| DDT | Inhaled | 17 | 1d2 Str | 1d4 Str | 9 | Lic (+1) | 20 | 4 hr. |
| Knockout gas | Inhaled | 18 | 1d3 Dex | Unconsciousness 1d3 hours | 12 | Res (+2) | 26 | 8 hr. |
| Lead arsenate (gas) | Inhaled | 12 | 1d2 Str | 1d4 Con | 6 | Res (+2) | 17 | 2 hr. |
| Lead arsenate (solid) | Ingested | 12 | 1d2 Con | 1d4 Con | 6 | Res (+2) | 18 | 2 hr. |
| Mustard gas | Inhaled | 17 | 1d4 Con | 2d4 Con | 12 | Mil (+3) | 26 | 8 hr. |
| Paris green (gas) | Inhaled | 14 | 1d2 Con | 1d4 Con | 9 | Res (+2) | 20 | 4 hr. |
| Paris green (solid) | Ingested | 14 | 1d4 Con | 1d4 Con | 9 | Res (+2) | 24 | 4 hr. |
| Puffer poison (fish) | Injury | 13 | 1d6 Str | Paralysis 2d6 minutes | 13 | Lic (+1) | n/a | n/a |
| Rattlesnake venom | Injury | 12 | 1d6 Con | 1d6 Con | 12 | Lic (+1) | n/a | n/a |
| Sarin nerve gas | Inhaled | 18 | 1d4 Con | 2d4 Con | 15 | Illegal (+4) | 30 | 15 hr. |
| Scorpion/tarantula venom | Injury | 11 | 1d2 Str | 1d2 Str | 12 | Lic (+1) | n/a | n/a |
| Strychnine | Injury | 19 | 1d3 Dex | 2d4 Con | 9 | Res (+2) | 23 | 4 hr. |
| Tear gas | Inhaled | 15 | Nauseated 1d6 rounds | — | 9 | Res (+2) | 21 | 4 hr. |
| VX nerve gas | Inhaled | 22 | 1d6 Con | 2d6 Con | 21 | Illegal (+4) | 42 | 48 hr. |
| 1 Chloroform gives off vapor that causes unconsciousness. Applying chloroform to an unwilling subject requires a successful grapple check and pin. | | | | | | | | |
| n/a: Certain poisons can’t be made with the Craft skill. Instead, such a poison must be obtained by extracting it from the creature in question. | | | | | | | | |

**Special:** A character without a chemical kit takes a –4 penalty on Craft (chemical) checks.

A character with the Builder feat gets a +2 bonus on all Craft (chemical) checks.

Craft (electronic) (Int) Trained Only

This skill allows a character to build electronic equipment from scratch, such as audio and video equipment, timers and listening devices, or radios and communication devices.

When building an electronic device from scratch, the character describes the kind of device he or she wants to construct; then the Gamemaster decides whether the device is simple, moderate, complex, or advanced com­pared to current technology.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Scratch-Built Electronics (Examples) | Purchase DC | Craft DC | Time |
| Simple (timer or detonator) | 8 | 15 | 1 hr. |
| Moderate (radio direction finder, electronic lock) | 12 | 20 | 12 hr. |
| Complex (cell phone) | 16 | 25 | 24 hr. |
| Advanced (computer) | 22 | 30 | 60 hr. |

**Special:** A character without an electrical tool kit takes a –4 penalty on Craft (electronic) checks.

A character with the Builder feat gets a +2 bonus on all Craft (electronic) checks.

Craft (mechanical) (Int) Trained Only

This skill allows a character to build mechanical devices from scratch, including engines and engine parts, weapons, armor, and other gadgets. When building a mechanical device from scratch, the character describes the kind of device he or she wants to construct; then the Gamemaster decides if the device is simple, moderate, complex, or advanced compared to current technology.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Scratch-Built Mechanical Device (Examples) | Purchase DC | Craft DC | Time |
| Simple (tripwire trap) | 5 | 15 | 1 hr |
| Moderate (engine component, light armor) | 12 | 20 | 12 hr. |
| Complex (automobile engine, 9mm autoloader handgun) | 16 | 25 | 24 hr. |
| Advanced (jet engine) | 20 | 30 | 60 hr. |

**Special:** A character without a mechanical tool kit takes a –4 penalty on Craft (mechanical) checks.

A character with the Builder feat gets a +2 bonus on all Craft (mechanical) checks.

Craft (pharmaceutical) (Int) Trained Only

This skill allows a character to compound medicinal drugs to aid in recovery from treatable illnesses. A medicinal drug gives a +2 circumstance bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of a disease.

The Craft (pharmaceutical) check is based on the severity of the disease to be countered as measured by the DC of the Fortitude save needed to resist it.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Disease Fortitude Save DC** | Purchase DC | **Craft DC** | **Time** |
| 14 or lower | 5 | 15 | 1 hr. |
| 15–18 | 10 | 20 | 3 hr. |
| 19–22 | 15 | 25 | 6 hr. |
| 23 or higher | 20 | 30 | 12 hr. |

**Special:** A character without a pharmacist kit takes a –4 penalty on Craft (pharmaceutical) checks.

A character with the Medical Expert feat gets a +2 bonus on all Craft (pharmaceutical) checks.

Craft (structural) (Int)

This skill allows a character to build wooden, concrete, or metal structures from scratch, including bookcases, desks, walls, houses, and so forth, and includes such handyman skills as plumbing, house painting, drywall, laying cement, and building cabinets.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Scratch-Built Structure (Examples)** | Purchase DC | **Craft DC** | **Time** |
| Simple (bookcase, false wall) | 5 | 15 | 12 hr. |
| Moderate (catapult, shed, house deck) | 10 | 20 | 24 hr. |
| Complex (bunker, domed ceiling) | 15 | 25 | 60 hr. |
| Advanced (house) | 20 | 30 | 600 hr. |

When building a structure from scratch, the character describes the kind of structure he or she wants to construct; then the Gamemaster decides if the structure is simple, moderate, complex, or advanced in scope and difficulty.

**Special:** A character without a mechanical tool kit takes a –4 penalty on Craft (structural) checks.

A character with the Builder feat gets a +2 bonus on all Craft (structural) checks.

Craft (visual art) (Int)

This skill allows a character to create paintings or drawings, take photographs, use a video camera, or in some other way create a work of visual art.

When attempting to create a work of visual art, the character simply makes a Craft (visual art) check, the result of which determines the quality of the work.

Unless the effort is particularly elaborate or the character must acquire an expensive piece of equipment, the basic components have a purchase DC of 5.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Skill Check Result | Effort Achieved |
| 9 or lower | Untalented amateur |
| 10–19 | Talented amateur |
| 20–24 | Professional |
| 25–30 | Expert |
| 31 or higher | Master |

Creating a work of visual art requires at least a full-round action, but usually takes an hour, a day, or more, depending on the scope of the project.

**Special:** A character with the Creative feat gets a +2 bonus on all Craft (visual art) checks.

Craft (writing) (Int)

This skill allows a character to create short stories, novels, scripts and screenplays, newspaper articles and columns, and similar works of writing.

When creating a work of writing, the player simply makes a Craft (writing) check, the result of which determines the quality of the work.

No Wealth check is necessary to use this Craft skill.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Skill Check Result | Effort Achieved |
| 9 or lower | Untalented amateur |
| 10–19 | Talented amateur |
| 20–24 | Professional |
| 25–30 | Expert |
| 31 or higher | Master |

Creating a work of writing requires at least 1 hour, but usually takes a day, a week, or more, depending on the scope of the project.

**Special:** A character with the Creative feat gets a +2 bonus on all Craft (writing) checks.

Disable Device (Int) Trained Only

**Check:** The GM makes the Disable Device check so that the character doesn’t necessarily know whether he or she has succeeded.

**Open Lock:** A character can pick conventional locks, finesse combination locks, and bypass electronic locks. The character must have a lockpick set (for a mechanical lock) or an electrical tool kit (for an electronic lock). The DC depends on the quality of the lock.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lock Type (Example) | DC |
| Cheap (briefcase lock) | 20 |
| Average (home deadbolt) | 25 |
| High quality (business deadbolt) | 30 |
| High security (branch bank vault) | 40 |
| Ultra-high security (bank headquarters vault) | 50 |

**Disable Security Device:** A character can disable a security device, such as an electric fence, motion sensor, or security camera. The character must be able to reach the actual device. If the device is monitored, the fact that the character attempted to disable it will probably be noticed.

When disabling a monitored device, the character can prevent his or her tampering from being noticed. Doing so requires 10 minutes and an electrical tool kit, and increases the DC of the check by +10.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Device Type (Example) | DC |
| Cheap (home door alarm) | 20 |
| Average (store security camera) | 25 |
| High quality (art museum motion detector) | 30 |
| High security (bank vault alarm) | 35 |
| Ultrahigh security (motion detector at Area 51) | 40 |

**Traps and Sabotage:** Disabling (or rigging or jamming) a simple mechanical device has a DC of 10. More intricate and complex devices have higher DCs. The GM rolls the check. If the check succeeds, the character disables the device. If the check fails by 4 or less, the character has failed but can try again. If the character fails by 5 or more, something goes wrong. If it’s a trap, the character springs it. If it’s some sort of sabotage, the character thinks the device is disabled, but it still works normally.

A character can rig simple devices to work normally for a while and then fail some time later (usually after 1d4 rounds or minutes of use).

**Try Again?:** Yes, though the character must be aware that he or she has failed in order to try again.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when making a Disable Device check. A character can take 20 to open a lock or to disable a security device, unless the character is trying to prevent his or her tampering from being noticed.

Possessing the proper tools gives a character the best chance of succeeding on a Disable Device check. Opening a lock requires a lockpick set (for a mechanical lock) or an electrical tool kit (for an electronic lock). Opening a locked car calls for a car opening kit. Disabling a security device requires either a mechanical tool kit or an electronic toll kit, depending on the nature of the device. If the character does not have the appropriate tools, he or she takes a –4 penalty on your check.

A lock release gun can open a mechanical lock of cheap or average quality without a Disable Device check.

A character with the Cautious feat and at least 1 rank in this skill gets a +2 bonus on all Disable Device checks.

**Time:** Disabling a simple mechanical device is a full-round action. Intricate or complex devices require 2d4 rounds.

Drive (Dex)

**Check:** Routine tasks, such as ordinary driving, don’t require a skill check. Make a check only when some unusual circumstance exists (such as inclement weather or an icy surface), or when the character is driving during a dramatic situation (the character is being chased or attacked, for example, or is trying to reach a destination in a limited amount of time). When driving, the character can attempt simple maneuvers or stunts. See Driving a Vehicle for more details.

**Try Again?:** Most driving checks have consequences for failure that make trying again impossible.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when driving, but can’t take 20.

A character with the Vehicle Expert feat gets a +2 bonus on all Drive checks.

There is no penalty for operating a general-purpose motor vehicle. Other types of motor vehicles (heavy wheeled, powerboat, sailboat, ship, and tracked) require the corresponding Surface Vehicle Operation feat, or the character takes a –4 penalty on Drive checks.

**Time:** A Drive check is a move action.

Escape Artist (Dex) Armor Penalty

**Check:** Make a check to escape from restraints or to squeeze through a tight space.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Restraint | DC |
| Ropes | Opponent’s Dex check +20 |
| Net | 20 |
| Handcuffs | 35 |
| Tight space | 30 |
| Grappler | Opponent’s grapple check |

For ropes, a character’s Escape Artist check is opposed by the Dexterity check result of the opponent who tied the bonds. Since it’s easier to tie someone up than to escape from being tied up, the opponent gets a +20 bonus on his or her Dexterity check.

For a tight space, a check is only called for if the character’s head fits but his or her shoulders don’t. If the space is long, such as in an airshaft, the GM may call for multiple checks. A character can’t fit through a space that his or her head doesn’t fit through.

A character can make an Escape Artist check opposed by his or her opponent’s grapple check to get out of a grapple or out of a pinned condition (so that the character is just being grappled). Doing so is an attack action, so if the character escapes the grapple he or she can move in the same round.

**Try Again?:** A character can make another check after a failed check if the character is squeezing through a tight space, making multiple checks. If the situation permits, the character can make additional checks as long as he or she is not being actively opposed.

**Special:** A character can take 10 on an Escape Artist check. A character can take 20 if he or she is not being actively opposed (a character can take 20 if he or she is tied up, even though it’s an opposed check, because the opponent isn’t actively opposing the character).

A character with the Nimble feat gets a +2 bonus on all Escape Artist checks.

**Time:** Making a check to escape from being bound by ropes, handcuffs, or other restraints (except a grappler) requires 1 minute. Escaping a net is a full-round action. Squeezing through a tight space takes at least 1 minute, maybe longer, depending on the distance that must be crossed.

Forgery (Int)

**Check:** Forgery requires ma­terials appropriate to the document being forged, and some time. To forge a document the character needs to have seen a similar document before. The complexity of the document, the character’s degree of familiarity with it, and whether the character needs to reproduce the signature or handwriting of a specific individual, provide modifiers to the Forgery check, as shown below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Factor | Check Modifier | Time |
| Document Type |  |  |
| Simple (typed letter, business card) | +0 | 10 min. |
| Moderate (letterhead, business form) | –2 | 20 min. |
| Complex (stock certificate, driver’s license) | –4 | 1 hr. |
| Difficult (passport) | –8 | 4 hr. |
| Extreme (military/law enforcement ID) | –16 | 24 hr. |
|  |  |
| Familiarity |  |
| Unfamiliar (seen once for less than a minute) | –4 |
| Fairly familiar (seen for several minutes) | +0 |
| Quite familiar (on hand, or studied at leisure) | +4 |
| Forger has produced other documents of same type | +4 |
| Document includes specific signature | –4 |

Some documents require security or authorization codes, whether authentic ones or additional forgeries. The GM makes the character’s check secretly so the character is not sure how good his or her forgery is.

The Forgery skill is also used to detect someone else’s forgery. The result of the original Forgery check that created the document is opposed by a Forgery check by the person who examines the document to check its authenticity. If the examiner’s check result is equal to or higher than the original Forgery check, the document is determined to be fraudulent. The examiner gains bonuses or penalties on his or her check as given in the table below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Condition | Examiner’s Check Modifier |
| Type of document unknown to examiner | –4 |
| Type of document somewhat known to examiner | –2 |
| Type of document well known to examiner | +0 |
| Document is put through additional tests **1** | +4 |
| Examiner only casually reviews the document **1** | –2 |
| 1 Cumulative with any of the first three conditions on the table. Apply this modifier along with one of the other three whenever appropriate. | |

A document that contradicts procedure, orders, or previous knowledge, or one that requires the examiner to relinquish a possession or a piece of information, can increase the examiner’s suspicion (and thus create favorable circumstances for the examiner’s opposed Forgery check).

**Try Again?:** No, since the forger isn’t sure of the quality of the original forgery.

**Special:** To forge documents and detect for­geries, one must be able to read and write the ­language in question. (The skill is language-­dependent.)

A character can take 10 when making a Forgery check, but can’t take 20.

A character with the Meticulous feat gets a +2 bonus on all Forgery checks.

A character without a forgery kit takes a –4 penalty on Forgery checks.

**Time:** Forging a short, simple document takes about 1 minute. Longer or more complex documents take 1d4 minutes per page or longer.

Gamble (Wis)

**Check:** To join or start a game, a character must first pay a stake. The character sets the purchase DC of the stake if he or she starts the game, or the GM sets it if the character joins a game. Stakes run from penny-ante (purchase DC 4) to astronomical (purchase DC 24). A character cannot take 20 when purchasing a stake.

If the stake is within the character’s means (it is equal to or less than his or her Wealth bonus), the character stands no chance of winning any significant amount. The character might come out ahead, but the amount is not enough to affect his or her Wealth bonus. Since paying the stake didn’t cost any points of Wealth bonus, the character doesn’t lose anything either.

If the stake is higher than the character’s Wealth bonus (before applying any reductions from purchasing the stake), the character gets a +1 bonus on his or her Gamble check for every point the purchase DC is above the character’s Wealth bonus.

The character’s Gamble check is opposed by the Gamble checks of all other participants in the game. (If playing at a casino, assume the house has a Gamble skill modifier equal to the stake purchase DC. Regardless of the stake purchase DC, the house does not get a bonus on its Gamble check for the purchase DC.) If there are many characters participating, the GM can opt to make a single roll for all of them, using the highest Gamble skill modifier among them and adding a +2 bonus to the check.

If the character beats all other participants, he or she wins and gains an increase to his or her Wealth bonus. The amount of the increase depends on the difference between the character’s check result and the next highest result among the other participants.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Check Result Difference | Wealth Bonus Increase |
| 1–9 | +1 |
| 10–19 | +2 |
| 20–29 | +3 |
| 30­–39 | +4 |
| 40 or more | +5 |

**Try Again?:** No, unless the character wants to put up another stake.

**Special:** A character can’t take 10 or take 20 when making a Gamble check.

A character with the Confident feat gets a +2 bonus on all Gamble checks.

**Time:** A Gamble check requires 1 hour.

Investigate (Int) Trained Only

**Check:** A character generally uses Search to discover clues and Investigate to analyze them. If the character has access to a crime lab, the character uses the Investigate skill to collect and prepare samples for the lab. The result of the Investigate check provides bonuses or penalties to the lab workers.

**Analyze Clue:** The character can make an Investigate check to apply forensics knowledge to a clue. This function of the Investigate skill does not give the character clues where none existed before. It simply allows the character to extract extra information from a clue he or she has found.

The base DC to analyze a clue is 15. It is modified by the time that has elapsed since the clue was left, and whether or not the scene was disturbed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Circumstances | DC Modifier |
| Every day since event (max modifier +10) | +2 |
| Scene is outdoors | +5 |
| Scene slightly disturbed | +2 |
| Scene moderately disturbed | +4 |
| Scene extremely disturbed | +6 |

**Collect Evidence:** The character can collect and prepare evidentiary material for a lab. This use of the Investigate skill requires an evidence kit.

To collect a piece of evidence, make an Investigate check (DC 15). If the character succeeds, the evidence is usable by a crime lab. If the character fails, a crime lab analysis can be done, but the lab takes a –5 penalty on any necessary check. If the character fails by 5 or more, the lab analysis simply cannot be done. On the other hand, if the character succeeds by 10 or more, the lab gains a +2 circumstance bonus on its checks to analyze the material.

This function of the Investigate skill does not provide the character with evidentiary items. It simply allows the character to collect items he or she has found in a manner that best aids in their analysis later, at a crime lab.

**Try Again?:** Generally, analyzing a clue again doesn’t add new insight unless another clue is introduced. Evidence collected cannot be recollected, unless there is more of it to take.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when making an Investigate check, but cannot take 20.

Collecting evidence requires an evidence kit. If the character does not have the appropriate kit, the character takes a –4 penalty on his or her check.

A character with the Attentive feat and at least 1 rank in this skill gets a +2 bonus on all Investigate checks.

**Time:** Analyzing a clue is a full-round action. Collecting evidence generally takes 1d4 minutes per object.

Navigate (Int)

**Check:** Make a Navigate check when a character is trying to find his or her way to a distant location without directions or other specific guidance. Generally, a character does not need to make a check to find a local street or other common urban site, or to follow an accurate map. However, the character might make a check to wend his or her way through a dense forest or a labyrinth of underground storm drains.

For movement over a great distance, make a Navigate check. The DC depends on the length of the trip. If the character succeeds, he or she moves via the best reasonable course toward his or her goal. If the character fails, he or she still reaches the goal, but it takes the character twice as long (the character loses time backtracking and correcting his or her path). If the character fails by more than 5, the or she travels the expected time, but only gets halfway to his or her destination, at which point the character becomes lost.

A character may make a second Navigate check (DC 20) to regain his or her path. If the character succeeds, he or she continues on to his or her destination; the total time for the trip is twice the normal time. If the character fails, he or she loses half a day before the character can try again. The character keeps trying until he or she succeeds, losing half a day for each failure.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Length of Trip** | DC |
| Short (a few hours) | 20 |
| Moderate (a day or two) | 22 |
| Long (up to a week) | 25 |
| Extreme (more than a week) | 28 |

When faced with multiple choices, such as at a branch in a tunnel, a character can make a Navigate check (DC 20) to intuit the choice that takes the character toward a known destination. If unsuccessful, the character chooses the wrong path, but at the next juncture, with a successful check, the character realizes his or her mistake.

A character cannot use this function of Navigate to find a path to a site if the character has no idea where the site is located. The GM may choose to make the Navigate check for the character in secret, so he or she doesn’t know from the result whether the character is following the right or wrong path.

A character can use Navigate to determine his or her position on earth without the use of any high-tech equipment by checking the constellations or other natural landmarks. The character must have a clear view of the night sky to make this check. The DC is 15.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when making a Navigate check. A character can take 20 only when determining his or her location, not when traveling.

A character with the Guide feat gets a +2 bonus on all Navigate checks.

**Time:** A Navigate check is a full-round action.

Pilot (Dex) Trained Only

**Check:** Typical piloting tasks don’t require checks. Checks are required during combat, for special maneuvers, or in other extreme circumstances, or when the pilot wants to attempt something outside the normal parameters of the vehicle. When flying, the character can attempt simple maneuvers and stunts (actions in which the pilot attempts to do something complex very quickly or in a limited space).

Each vehicle’s description includes a maneuver modifier that applies to Pilot checks made by the operator of the vehicle.

**Special:** A character can take 10 when making a Pilot check, but can’t take 20.

A character with the Vehicle Expert feat gets a +2 bonus on all Pilot checks.

There is no penalty for operating a general-purpose fixed-wing aircraft. Other types of aircraft (heavy aircraft, helicopters, jet fighters, and spacecraft) require the corresponding Aircraft Operation feat, or else the character takes a –4 penalty on Pilot checks.

**Time:** A Pilot check is a move action.

Repair (Int) Trained Only

**Check:** Most Repair checks are made to fix complex electronic or mechanical devices. The DC is set by the GM. In general, simple repairs have a DC of 10 to 15 and require no more than a few minutes to accomplish. More complex repair work has a DC of 20 or higher and can require an hour or more to complete. Making repairs also involves a monetary cost when spare parts or new components are needed, represented by a Wealth check. If the GM decides this isn’t necessary for the type of repair the character is attempting, then no Wealth check is needed.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Repair Task (Example) | Purchase DC | Repair DC | Time |
| Simple (tool, simple weapon) | 4 | 10 | 1 min. |
| Moderate (mechanical or electronic component) | 7 | 15 | 10 min. |
| Complex (mechanical or electronic device) | 10 | 20 | 1 hr. |
| Advanced (cutting-edge mechanical or electronic device) | 13 | 25 | 10 hr. |

**Jury-Rig:** A character can choose to attempt jury-rigged, or temporary, repairs. Doing this reduces the purchase DC by 3 and the Repair check DC by 5, and allows the character to make the checks in as little as a full-round action. However, a jury-rigged repair can only fix a single problem with a check, and the temporary repair only lasts until the end of the current scene or encounter. The jury-rigged object must be fully repaired thereafter.

A character can also use jury-rig to hot-wire a car or jump-start an engine or electronic device. The DC for this is at least 15, and it can be higher depending on the presence of security devices.

The jury-rig application of the Repair skill can be used untrained.

**Try Again?:** Yes, though in some specific cases, the GM may decide that a failed Repair check has negative ramifications that prevent repeated checks.

**Special:** A character can take 10 or take 20 on a Repair check. When making a Repair check to accomplish a jury-rig repair, a character can’t take 20.

Repair requires an electrical tool kit, a mechanical tool kit, or a multipurpose tool, depending on the task. If the character do not have the appropriate tools, he or she takes a –4 penalty on the check.

Craft (mechanical) or Craft (electronic) can provide a +2 synergy bonus on Repair checks made for mechanical or electronic devices (see Skill Synergy).

A character with the Gearhead feat and at least 1 rank in this skill gets a +2 bonus on all Repair checks.

**Time:** See the table for guidelines. A character can make a jury-rig repair as a full-round action, but the work only lasts until the end of the current encounter.

Research (Int)

**Check:** Researching a topic takes time, skill, and some luck. The GM determines how obscure a particular topic is (the more obscure, the higher the DC) and what kind of information might be available depending on where the character is conducting his or her research.

Information ranges from general to protected. Given enough time (usually 1d4 hours) and a successful skill check, the character gets a general idea about a given topic. This assumes that no obvious reasons exist why such information would be unavailable, and that the character has a way to acquire restricted or protected information.

The higher the check result, the better and more complete the information. If the character wants to discover a specific fact, date, map, or similar bit of information, add +5 to +15 to the DC.

**Try Again?:** Yes.

**Special:** A character can take 10 or take 20 on a Research check.

A character with the Studious feat gets a +2 bonus on all Research checks.

Computer Use can provide a +2 synergy bonus on a Research check when searching computer records for data (see Skill Synergy).

**Time:** A Research check takes 1d4 hours.

Treat Injury (Wis)

**Check:** The DC and effect depend on the task attempted.

Long-Term Care (DC 15): With a medical kit, the successful application of this skill allows a patient to recover hit points and ability points lost to temporary damage at an advanced rate—3 hit points per character level or 3 ability points restored per day of complete rest. A new check is made each day; on a failed check, recovery occurs at the normal rate for that day of rest and care.

A character can tend up to as many patients as he or she has ranks in the skill. The patients need complete bed rest (doing nothing all day). The character needs to devote at least ½ hour of the day to each patient the character is caring for.

**Restore Hit Points (DC 15):** With a medical kit, if a character has lost hit points, the character can restore some of them. A successful check, as a full-round action, restores 1d4 hit points. The number restored can never exceed the character’s full normal total of hit points. This application of the skill can be used successfully on a character only once per day.

**Revive Dazed, Stunned, or Unconscious Character (DC 15):** With a first aid kit, the character can remove the dazed, stunned, or unconscious condition from a character. This check is an attack action.

A successful check removes the dazed, stunned, or unconscious condition from an affected character. The character can’t revive an unconscious character who is at –1 hit points or lower without first stabilizing the character.

**Stabilize Dying Character (DC 15):** With a medical kit, a character can tend to a character who is dying. As an attack action, a successful Treat Injury check stabilizes another character. The stabilized character regains no hit points, but he or she stops losing them. The character must have a medical kit to stabilize a dying character.

**Surgery (DC 20):** With a surgery kit, a character can conduct field surgery. This application of the Treat Injury skill carries a –4 penalty, which can be negated with the Surgery feat. Surgery requires 1d4 hours; if the patient is at negative hit points, add an additional hour for every point below 0 the patient has fallen.

Surgery restores 1d6 hit points for every character level of the patient (up to the patient’s full normal total of hit points) with a successful skill check. Surgery can only be used successfully on a character once in a 24-hour period.

A character who undergoes surgery is fatigued for 24 hours, minus 2 hours for every point above the DC the surgeon achieves. The period of fatigue can never be reduced below 6 hours in this fashion.

**Treat Disease (DC 15):** A character can tend to a character infected with a treatable disease. Every time the diseased character makes a saving throw against disease effects (after the initial contamination), the treating character first makes a Treat Injury check to help the diseased character fend off secondary damage. This activity takes 10 minutes. If the treating character’s check succeeds, the treating character provides a bonus on the diseased character’s saving throw equal to his or her ranks in this skill.

**Treat Poison (DC 15):** A character can tend to a poisoned character. When a poisoned character makes a saving throw against a poison’s secondary effect, the treating character first makes a Treat Injury check as an attack action. If the treating character’s check succeeds, the character provides a bonus on the poisoned character’s saving throw equal to his or her ranks in this skill.

**Try Again?:** Yes, for restoring hit points, reviving dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters, stabilizing dying characters, and surgery. No, for all other uses of the skill.

**Special:** The Surgery feat gives a character the extra training he or she needs to use Treat Injury to help a wounded character by means of an operation.

A character can take 10 when making a Treat Injury check. A character can take 20 only when restoring hit points or attempting to revive dazed, stunned, or unconscious characters.

Long-term care, restoring hit points, treating disease, treating poison, or stabilizing a dying character requires a medical kit. Reviving a dazed, stunned, or unconscious character requires either a first aid kit or a medical kit. Surgery requires a surgery kit. If the character does not have the appropriate kit, he or she takes a –4 penalty on the check.

A character can use the Treat Injury skill on his or herself only to restore hit points, treat disease, or treat poison. The character takes a –5 penalty on your check any time he or she treats his or herself.

A character with the Medical Expert feat gets a +2 bonus on all Treat Injury checks.

**Time:** Treat Injury checks take different amounts of time based on the task at hand, as described above.